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Absent Voting. There has been rapid spread during the last four years of the idea of giving absent electors a chance to vote by mail. Prior to 1913 only one State—Kansas—had adopted the method. During the sessions of 1913 the States of Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska and North Dakota passed laws to permit absent voters to vote by mail. In 1915 Colorado, Iowa, Michigan, Montana, Vermont, Wisconsin and Wyoming passed similar acts. The electors in California in 1914 rejected an absent voters' act by a vote of 244,855 in favor and 390,337 against, while Michigan voters adopted a constitutional amendment permitting absent voting by certain classes by a vote of 190,510 for to 175,948 against.

In the States of Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Nebraska, Montana, Minnesota the absent voting provisions apply to primaries as well as elections. There has been quite general expansion of the idea of registration by mail and many states now provide a method for doing so. Thus, it is possible in several states to register, and vote at the primaries and at the general election without appearing in person.

The Colorado law provides that the voters must appear at the polls in the precinct where he happens to be and there present his certificate of registration and be identified by one or more resident voters in the precinct. He must make an affidavit stating his qualifications to vote and that he is unable to vote in his home precinct. The vote of any such person is sealed in an envelope and forwarded to the election officials in the county in which the elector resides. The votes are kept separate until the canvassing boards meet when they are added to the tally sheet.

In Iowa the voters may make application to the auditor of his county or the clerk of the city or town by mail not more than fifteen days nor less than three days or may appear in person not more than ten days nor less than one day before the election stating that he will be unavoidably absent from the county on the day of election and that he desires to vote. Upon receipt of the application, the auditor or clerk mails a ballot to the elector. The voter must sign an affidavit and mark his ballot in the presence of the person taking the oath, fold the same and securely seal it in the presence of such officer and mail it by registered mail to the officer from whom the ballot was obtained. The ballots so received are delivered to the judges of election on election day and if found to be correct, the ballot is counted with the other ballots.

The legislature of Michigan in 1915 carried the constitutional pro-

vision into effect by a law which gives the right to vote by mail to electors in the military service in the State or Nation in time of war, insurrection or rebellion; members of the legislature in session; students and commercial travelers. Such an absent voter must make application to the township, village or city clerk requesting a ballot in a manner similar to that in Iowa. The clerk mails or delivers a ballot to the elector with directions. He must make an affidavit and deposit the ballot in the mails addressed to the clerk from whom he received it. The clerk holds the ballot until election day and delivers it to the election officials who deposit it in the ballot box after satisfying themselves that it is a valid vote.

The Montana act provides that an absent elector may make application to the county clerk at least thirty days before an election and the clerk shall furnish to such elector a ballot. The elector makes an affidavit and encloses the ballot in an envelope in the presence of the officer taking the oath and mails the same to the clerk. The ballot is delivered by the clerk to the election judges. Considerable detail is added in this act to prevent fraud.

The Vermont law provides that any legal voter may vote for state officers, United States senators and electors in the state in which he resides, if he files with the clerk of the town in which he desires to vote a certificate from the town of his legal residence stating that he is on the check list of voters in said town.

The Wisconsin law is very similar to the laws described above, requiring that the elector make application to the clerk of his own county for an official ballot. The clerk issues a ballot to such elector and the elector makes an oath of his qualifications and marks the ballot, places it in an envelope and seals the envelope in the presence of the officer taking the oath and mails the same by registered mail to the officer issuing the ballot. This ballot is delivered to the election officers and is deposited the same as though the elector were present.

The Wyoming law gives a person a right to vote in the place where he may be present on election day. The elector must first obtain a certificate showing that he is registered in his own precinct and make a sworn application to the registration agent or county clerk asking for a certificate showing that he is entitled to vote. With this certificate the voter goes to the polls in the place where he may be on election day and casts his ballot in the manner similar to that in Colorado. The election officials send such vote to the clerk of the county in which the voter resides where it is canvassed the same as in Colorado.